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A LETTER FROM GEN. SCOTT.

On the Subject of Slavery.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 9 1843.

DEAR SIR: I have been waiting for an evening's leisure to answer your letter before me; and after an unreasonable delay, am at last obliged to reply in the midst of official occupations.

That I ever have been named in connexion with the presidency of the United States has not, I can assure you, the son of an ancient neighbor and friend, been by any contrivance or desire of mine; and certainly I shall never be in the field for that high office, unless placed there by a regular nomination. Not, then, being a candidate, and seeing no near prospect of being made one, I ought perhaps to decline troubling you or others with my humble opinions on great principles of State rights and federal administration; but as I cannot plead ignorance of the partiality of a few friends in several parts of the Union, who may by possibility in a certain event, succeed in bringing me within the field from which a whig candidate is to be selected, I prefer to err on the side of frankness and candor rather than by silence to allow any stranger unwittingly to commit himself to my support.

Your inquiries open the whole question of domestic slavery, which has, in different forms for a number of years agitated Congress and the country.

Premising that you are the first person who has interrogated me on the subject, I give you the basis of what would be my reply in greater detail, if time allowed and the contingency alluded to above were less remote.

In boyhood, at William and Mary College, and in common with most, if not all, my companions, I became deeply impressed with the views given by Mr. Jefferson in his "Notes on Virginia" and by Judge Tucker, in the Appendix to his edition of "Blackstone's Commentaries," *in favor of a gradual emancipation of slaves.*—That Appendix I have not seen in thirty odd years, and in the same period have read scarcely anything on the subject; *but my early impressions are fresh and unchanged.* Hence if I had had the honor of a seat in the Virginia legislature in the winter of 1831–2, when a bill was brought forward to carry out those views, I should certainly have given it my hearty support.

I suppose I scarcely need say, that in my opinion Congress has no color of authority under the constitution for touching the relation of master and slave within a State.

I hold the opposite opinion in respect to the District of Columbia. Here, with the consent of the owners, or on the payment of "just compensation," Congress may legislate at its discretion. But my conviction is equally strong that, useless it be step by step with the legislatures of Virginia and Maryland; it would be dangerous to both races in those States to touch the relation between master and slave in this District.

I have from the first been of opinion that Congress was bound by the constitution to receive, to refer, and to report upon petitions relating to domestic slavery, as in the case of all other petitions; but I have not failed to see and to regret the unavoidable irritation which the former have produced in the southern States, with the consequent peril to the two colors, whereby the adoption of any plan of emancipation has everywhere among us been greatly retarded.

I own myself no slaves; but never have attached blame to masters for not liberating their slaves—well knowing that liberation, without the means of sending them in comfort to some position favorable to the pursuit of happiness, would, in most cases, be highly injurious to all around as well as to the manumitted families themselves, unless the operation were gradual and under the auspices of prudent legislation. But I am persuaded that it is a high moral obligation of masters and slaveholding States to employ all means, not incompatible with the safety of both colors, to meliorate slavery, even to extermination.

It is gratifying to know that general amelioration has been great, and is still progressive notwithstanding the disturbing causes alluded to above. The more direct process of emancipation may, no doubt, be earlier commenced and quickened in some communities than others. Each, I do not question, has the right to judge for itself, both as to time and means; and I consider interference or aid from without except on invitation from authority within, to be as hurtful to the sure progress of amelioration, as it may be fatal to the lives of vast multitudes, of all ages, sexes, and colors. The work of liberation cannot be forced without such horrid results. Christian philanthrophy is ever mild and considerate. Hence all violence ought to be deprecated by the friends of religion and humanity. Their persuasions cannot fail at the right time to free the master from the slave, and the slave from the master—perhaps before the latter shall have found out and acknowledge that the relation between the parties had long been mutually prejudicial to their worldly interests.

There is no evil without, in the order of Providence, some compensating benefit. The bleeding African was torn from his savage home by his ferocious neighbors, sold into slavery, and cast upon this continent. Here, in the mild South, the race has wonderfully multiplied compared with anything ever known in barbarous life.—The descendants of a few thousands have become many millions; and all, from the first, made acquainted with the arts of civilization, and, above all, brought under the light of the Gospel.

From the promise made to Abraham some two thousand years had elasped before the advent of our Savior, and the Isralites, the chosen people of God, were, for some wise purpose, suffered to remain in bondage longer than Africans have been on our shore. This race has already experienced the resulting compensations alluded to; and as the white missionary has never been able to penetrate the dark regions of Africa, or to establish himself in its interior, it may be within the schemes of Providence that the great work of spreading the gospel over that vast continent, with all the arts and comforts of civilization, is to be finally accomplished by the black man restored from American bondage. A foothold there has already been gained for him; and in such a scheme centuries are but as seconds to Him who moves worlds as man moves a finger.

I do but suggest the remedies and consolations of slavery to inspire patience, hope, and charity, on all sides. The mighty subject calls for the exercise of all man's wisdom and virtue, and these may not suffice without aid from a higher source.

It is in the foregoing manner, my dear sir, that I have long been in the habit, in conversation, of expressing myself all over our common country on the question of negro slavery; and I must say that I have found but very few persons to differ with me, however opposite their geographical positions.

Such are the views or opinions which you seak I cannot suppress or mutilate them, although now liable to be more generally known. Do with them what you please. Neither correct nor shun publicity.

I remain, very truly, yours,
WINFIELD SCOTT

T. P. ATKINSON, Esq., Danville, Va.

A CARD.

WASHINGTON, July 3, 1852.

To prevent all mistake and misapprehension, we the undersigned, members of Congress, adopt this method of making a joint statement to our constituents, respectively, and to all who may take an interest in the subject, that we cannot and will not support Gen. Scott for the Presidency, as he now stands before the American People, for the following amongst other reasons:

He obstinately refused, up to the time of his nomination to give any public opinion in favor of that series of measures of the last Congress known as the compromise; the permanent maintenance of which with us is a question of paramount importance. Nor has he since his nomination made any declaration of his *approval* of those measures as a final adjustment of the issues in controversy.

It is true the resolutions of the Convention that nominated him are as clear and as explicit upon this question as need be; but Gen. Scott, in his letter of acceptance, which contains, all that we have from him on that matter, does not give them the approval of his judgment. This he seems studiously to have avoided. He accepts the nomination "with the resolution annexed." That is; he takes the nomination *cum onere*, as an individual takes an estate, with whatever *incumbrances* it may be loaded with. And the only pledge and guaranty he offers for his "adherence to the principles of the resolutions" are "the known incidents of a long public life, &c."

Amongst these "*known incidents*" of his life there is *not one*, so far as we are aware of, in favor of the principles of the compromise. In one, at least, of his public letters he has expressed sentiments inimical to the institutions of fifteen States of the Union. Since the passage of the compromise he has suffered his name to be held up before the people of several of the States as a candidate for the Presidency by the open and avowed enemies of those measures. And in the Convention that conferred this nomination upon him he permitted himself to be used by the *Free-soilers* in that body to defeat Mr. Fillmore and Webster, because of their advocacy of these measures, and their firm adherence to the policy that sustained them.

To join such men and aid them in complying their triumph over, *and sacrifice of*, the true and *tried* friends of the constitution and the faithful discharge of all its obligations is what we can never do. The dictates of duty and patriotism sternly forbid it.

We consider Gen. Scott, as the *favorite* candidate of the *Free-Soil* wing of the Whig party. That his policy, if he should be elected, would be warped and shaped to conform to their views, and to elevate them to power in the administration of the Government can but be considered as a legitimate and probable result and believing as we do, that the views of that faction of mischievous men are dangerous not only to the just and constitutional rights of the Southern States which we represent in part, but to the peace and quiet of the whole country, and to the permanent union of the States we regard it as the highest duty of the well-wishers of the country every where, whatever else they may do, to at least withhold from him their support. This we intend to do.

A. H. STEPHENS, of Ga.
C. J. FAULKNER, of Va.
W. BROOKE, of Miss.
A. WHITE, of Ala.
J. ABERCROMBIE, of Ala.
R. TOOMBS, of Ga.
J. JOHNSON, of Ga.

For reasons to some extent indicated in speeches and addresses heretofore made by the undersigned, they deem it to be their duty to withhold their support from Gen. Scott as a candidate for the Presidency. If it should seem to be necessary, we will hereafter in some form, exhibit more fully to our constituents the facts and reasons which have brought us to this determination.

M. P. GENTRY, of Tenn.
C. H. WILLIAMS, of Tenn.

The people of Portland, Ky., have voted in favor of annexation to Louisville.

ADDRESS BY MR. B. A. VAUGHAN

PRINCIPAL OF THE FRANKLIN ACADEMY, DELIVERED AT THE RECENT EXAMINATION OF THE STUDENTS OF THAT INSTITUTION.

(Published by request of the Trustees.)

That no one is here present but who is deeply anxious for the perpetuity of our national glory, honor and character, I cannot for one moment call in question; and it being equally unquestionable that our future national destiny is to be controlled by those who are at present occupants of the school-room, I will not insult your good sense by an argument to prove. Also, that from beneath our own humble roof *may* arise, the statesman or patriot, who, in future years, will be conspicuous as a coadjutor in steadying the tottering fabric of our nation's glory; or else in rearing higher and higher, that superstructure, whose foundation was by our forefathers laid so broad, until in its towering height it shall become a beacon light to every nation steering for the harbors of peace, plenty and happiness, through the channel of liberty, is equally possible.

Hence, the question naturally arises, as to how you are preparing these actors in a future scene, for the performance of their task? For an answer to that question, I glance back at the policy of our own school-room, and truth compels me to say, nature's child has been permitted to become nature's man with but little assistance from cultivation. Such being the conclusion arrived at, I enquire what is man naturally? To find an answer to such a consideration, I have gone to the wilds of our own land to find him in a purely native state; asking the history of the various tribes, what he is in his loftiest elevation? But one answer comes back to us from the east from the west, from the north from the south, and all agree that around the council fire nature's mightiest power is exhibited in the power of speech which we call oratory.

Then the subject of oratory with its attending spirit, eloquence, shall be the subject for our brief consideration; while I ask you to bear it in mind, that here only you propose to give your sons a knowledge of those rules which govern oratory and define eloquence.

It is one thing to acquire knowledge—it is another to acquire the art of dispensing it for the benefit of mankind. It should be chiefly required of youth, to train their minds to severe exertions, by seeking and treasuring up the truths of science. But you must not forget while gathering, to learn how to scatter abroad. You should therefore cherish this institution, and by its aid form the manner of your children for the busy scenes of life. Here you should teach them the use of materials acquired by study, as you would hope the loved son of each of you, would use them in after life. Your school-room furnishes them with armor to go out and meet a striving world. Many of you feel the necessity of this armor, and that, exclusive of all other inducements should influence your decision in your child's favor.—Do you clothe the young mind with this school-room armor, and my word for it, his future will prove that here his hand was made cunning and his heart bold, whether used for protection or defence, whether it be the offering of the pen, or the more violent rostrum.

In approaching this theme we seem to enter a boundless field. The mind wandering over it, glances at such interesting scenes, it reluctantly stays at a single point. Here curiosity may indulge in the luxury of speculation; here philosophy may revel in the sweets of analysis; and from hence genius may arise and scale the heavens, and like Prometheus, glow amid the lustre of their fires. In such a field being so liable to wander we will confine ourselves to the enquiry, as to what constitutes the orator? as 'tis he we find moulded in nature's highest form.

Many excellences combine to constitute the orator. Some of them are spontaneous, others are of cultivation.

1st. Nature must have dealt bountifully with his mind, she must have enriched it with the power of vigorous thought, and made it susceptible of sudden and deep emotion. This power does not belong to every mind. But how often is it possessed when it is never developed. It is to this sin I'd call the patron's attention and warn them to guard against. The elements of intellectual greatness are concealed in many minds like treasures of fine gold beneath the solid earth. Mind rises in the attributes of excellence, by nice and imperceptible gradations, from the weakest to the strongest; from the walks of groveling idiocy, to the sublimest elevations, where god-like genius dwells. Eloquence flourishes upon high ground. It loves the lofty elevations.

But the orator in some degree, must have the fire and phrenzy of the poet. His soul must have nerves as well as sinews; for what is strength without excitement? Many a giant mind moves so graceless and slugishly, as to display nothing but a deformed and loathsome bulkiness. To a mind resting in undisturbed repose like stagnant water, what avails Achillean strength?—Did a slumbering Achilles ever win a victory? The orator must possess not only strength but ardor, fierce as the renovated fury which "stretched the mighty Hector upon the plain." He must seem all sense, and yet all reason, all impulse, yet all intellect. In a word, "thought and passion must blend together, like glass and fire in the apocalyptic vision." Then let us enquire of you, are you giving him that strength, that ardor, that sense, and cultivating that intelect here?—Can it be acquired from that limited course of studies you compel him to pursue?

2nd. If thus gifted by nature, he must diligently cultivate his art. For eloquence is an art. Here it is, in the school room we must give him such culture. We often hear of nature's orators. It is true nature has her orators, yet they are less her's than some suppose. They are her's like seeds and soil, which by culture afford delicious fruit. There may be fruit without culture, but much of it will be poisonous and bitter. Without cultivation there cannot be a garden of wholesome fruits and fragrant flowers, arranged with exquisite taste and skill. Eloquence is like blending magnificent mountain scenery, with the beauties of a well cultivated garden. Nature gives birth to orators and cultivation rears them. This cultivation is received in the school-room, at least 'tis there the the foundation is laid, and what can be the superstructure if the founation is frail?

He must be familiar with the power of language. Language may be considered the tool of his trade, by this he works up the material of his thoughts and prepares them for the public mind. He must therefore ascertain the structure, the force, and the most effective use of his instrument. And to do this he will have to go beyond the confines of the grammar and geography.—There are two ways of doing this, one is by reading; then encourage your child to read at home; many productions of the pen, which can not come into the school-room, display most forcibly the power of words in their various combinations of taste and beauty, by which much may be learned of the power and structure of language, in what constructions it acquires its utmost strenght, without having with it the fatigue and odium of a school-master's training.

And here we consider to the value placed upon Roman and Grecian literature. The ancient classics are said to contain an immeasurable beauty and fire, which cannot be exhibited in modern composition. If this be so, and I will not call it in question, let your child approach them, and inspire his genius with their utmost charms and beauties. But let him not overlook the beauty of our own vernacular, in his enthusiastic devotion to those of a buried tongue. Let him study our own orators and poets, at least with half the zeal of his soul, and let him learn to admire them. But should he in his juvenile admiration of Homer and Virgil, or Demosthenes and Cicero, learn to despise Milton and Burke; should he come to believe that the beauties of song and the charms of eloquence are exotics of another clime, which cannot grow in our poor soil, his classics will prove, as they have done to many weak minds, his misfortune. They will serve merely to expose mental weaknesses, which might, otherwise have remained concealed. Fields of ancient literature should be wandered through as Peter the great visited other kingdoms, not blindly to admire everything foreign, but select carefully after impartial examination, what is excellent and transfer it to enrich and embellish our own partial domains.

But reading is not the only means of becoming acquainted with the power of language. Composition, both extempore and elaborate, is equally efficacious. Extempore composition helps to a ready and flowing utterance, which is all important to the orator. It renders the construction of sentences and arrangement of thoughts rapid and unembarassed. This too must to a great measure be encouraged at home. Those splendid orators of antiquity, whose productions are so enchanting and overpowering, were probably skilled in unpremeditated discourse. But how did they acquire such skill? They trained their minds by the most finished efforts of the pen, to reach far, search deep, rise high until they were perfectly familiar with the profoundest depths and loftiest heights, and there they seemed at home. By writing they accustomed themselves to clothe their richest conceptions and most subtle arguments, in a diction both correct and graceful.—Language suited to the most lofty musing of the most lofty minds become to them almost spontaneous; but it become so by the toil of years.

Whoever would use a fascinating style with graceful ease, must resort to the pen. He who never writes, will never learn to use language, with delicate precision and captivating effect.—He will be burdened with trifling words and repetitions. He will exhibit no uniform style but display all characters by turns. Prose and poetry, comedy and tragedy, short and long, and every other metre, will strangely adorn his discourse, as the mixed colors did the garment of the youthful patriarch. Then let your sons read—let them speak—but above all let them write.

It is necessary too to have an acquaintance with nature. It were well if this acquaintance was such as is commonly called philosophy. Yet there is something more essential than philosophy itself. The orator must be accustomed to look on nature with a poetic eye. He must gaze on the external forms with high admiration, tho' he should despise her concealed charms. For on the face of nature are all the colors in which he must continually dip his pencil as he sketches the forms of truth. Truth is apprehended by the aid of the senses, and images of the principal mercur, in which the forms of such are reflected to the soul. The orator therefore must be familiar with creation and be able to challenge creation's homage. In its serene and terrific aspects, it must subserve a two-fold purpose. It must first inspire the speaker with himself, and then be his talisman to others. When the ray-gilt light of dawn or evening blushes on the horizon, he must gaze until the waxing or waning glory inspires his soul with enthusiastic transport. He must hang like a sentinel on the skirts of the wrathful tempest, till the genius of storms takes possession of his soul. On every object fair or deformed, he must be able to lay his hand, and wreathe it into forms of beauty or of terror, and send it forth to minister his will. He must catch every token from nature, by which she offers enchanting imagery to shadow forth in livelier colors or more alluring forms, some hated or neglected truth. He must wait on all her movements with a watchful eye and a listening ear. He must sail with her floods, and career with her storms. He must move with her swift wing lightnings, and sport with her earthquake terrors. In a word, he must call the universe his own, and prove his heritage by seizing on it. The sun, moon, and stars must pay him obeisance. Are you fitting him for this high destiny? After having bid good-bye to these walls, will he be able to use the tools which skill placed in his hand.

And man, too, must bow down before him; he must be acquainted with man as a being of thought and passion. He is to operate on man as the subject of conviction and persuasion. In this vocation he must use all the delicate machinery of the soul. He must touch it familiarly as the breeze does the chords of the harp; yet skillfully, as the cunning hand modulates the tone of the organ. And can he do this so as to wake up music in the soul, and avoid all discord there, unless he knows the structure and power of the instrument. It is impossible! He may indeed rouse its peal, but it will be no peal of melting harmony; he will do violence to the sacred powers of the soul; he will rudely assail what angels approach with awe; he will lay careless hand upon that altar of affection, which the Son of God breathes upon with deep emotion; he will, like Satan in paradise, rouse discord among the moral elements. If his efforts awake some spirit stirring strain, whose casual dispason is like the song of Heaven, their cadence will be like the fall of Lucifer from Heaven to Hell.

He must know his own susceptibilities to the impress of truth, whether for conviction, entertainment or reformation. For this let him live at home and only visit abroad. Let him spare time from all other books to read attentively the volume within; let him not enter the outer chambers only, but the most secret recesses of his soul; let him penetrate its retreats, and survey the foundations of thought and passion; let him learn to unlock those fountains with a key which is to him, as the prophet's rod is to the smitten rock; let him by the enchantment of his invocation draw forth from those fountains, sympathies, as pure as the joys, and beneficent as the ministry of angels. He must study the susceptibility of the human mind, and he also must ascertain the peculiarities of his own mental constitution, that he may husband it discreetly and suit his efforts to his genius.

Look at the variety of nature. The worlds which roll in silent majesty through the heavens are not equal in magnitude, period or circumstance. Look at the animal tribes around you, and observe their generic, their specific, and individual peculiarities. Survey the human family, it is composed of million on millions, all differing in voice, complexion or feature, so that your friends can select you at a glance from the swarming population of any city in the world. And with such variety, is the impress of mind. Then, where shall this variety be observed so as to give it careful culture in the school-room, but at home? Who more competent to trace it in all its delicacy, than Father and Mother. These and many other developments, whose sin of underdevelopment is put upon the broad shoulders of the schoolmaster, *parents* are responsible for. Is it not at once admitted that the pictures of thought, vary as much as the features of the human countenance? Look into our best English authors, and you will be charmed not only with the beauties of each, but also by that variety of each combined in the whole. What a trio is that, to go no further, which is composed of Adison, Goldsmith and Johnson. Each has reared a world of his own, grouped them in sweet proximity, and resigned them to the dominion of different graces whose names are Beauty, Simplicity and Dignity.

Let your young men take walks on classic grounds, when their variety is displayed in striking forms. Then let them witness it in scenes which rise like fairy worlds, by the incantations of the heavy muse. And in the language of Homer and of Horace, the pictures of thought are so true to the original, that their resemblance and differences are more readily perceived. This variety in the pictured thoughts of man, is to be traced to an original peculiarity in each mental constitution. The fields of thought have been enriched with many different soils, as variously adapted to the fruits produced. And we are commissioned to rear such fruits as are congenial with the soils of our own minds. To some is given a ready and clear perception; to some patience for a slow but sure investigation; to some a memory capacious as the ocean; and to some an imagination fervid as the sun beams, and lofty as the heavens which they lighten and adorn.

These are the soils of mind. We must ascertain the adaptations of that which heaven has assigned to our own care and culture. We must "know ourselves." For this we must accomplish the analysis of our own minds.—Then we shall learn how to commence and carry on the work of mental improvement. Unacquainted with ourselves, we may labor to develope some faculty which was deformed and stinted at its birth, and which no pains of ours can mould to graceful forms, and quicken to lively action in the pursuit and display of truth.

Self-knowledge surveys the powers of mind, and gradates them according to their strength and value. Then the most healthy and robust faculties should be cultivated, and set in striking attitudes before the public eye. And be assured, young gentlemen, *you*, in whom the fire of ambition is kindling, that one may hold a princely rank among orators, with a mind enfeebled in some, if it but abound in the wealth of other faculties.—The greatest orators have not been men of universal but of partial gifts. They happily discern the course which nature pointed out to them, and resigned themselves to nature's guidance, attempting little else but to contrive how aspiring their flight could be, in the direction which she pointed to them. They were wise. No course can succeed other than that which nature dictates. Its discovery, like that of the instrument which guides the navigator, must go before the first step of the aspirant. Self knowledge will guide to that discovery.

We repeat it, therefore, whoever is ambitious of oratory must live at home. The voice of nature to him must be heard no where else. If he read nothing more, let him read his own soul. Let him search the recesses of thought and passion. Let his soul be to himself a specimen in clear exposure, of all that by nature, or by nurture enters into it. Let him watch its active and its passive states, which change suspend, and produce those states. Without a knowledge of man, as a being of thought, of purpose, of passion, eloquence is impossible. But it is possible only as an accident of speech. It is not then like sunshine, a strong and steady light diffusing its charm to the world; but rather like a meteor, which glares an instant through the darkness, then veils the offended eye in tenfold deeper gloom.

Eloquence is called the "art of persuasion." We persuade the unwilling or unbelieving.—Surely this is an arduous task. To convert men to new opinions, much more to adopt new rules of life and conduct, requires the absence of all that is repulsive, and the presence of all that is attractive, in thought, in arrangement, and in impassioned appeal.

To display the attractive and avoid the repulsive, are the positive and negative virtues of oratory. Let us consider its negative virtues.—These are much more difficult to acquire, as are much more seldom met with than the positive. In order to avoid the repulsive, the orator must guard himself with the reflection, that his hearers, as well as himself, possess—

"Interna powers:
Active and strong, and feeling alive
To each fine impulse: a discerning sense
Of decent and sublime; with quick disgust
For things deformed, or disarranged, or gross."

He must cautiously approach these powers internally. He must salute them with sounds softer than the lute, and yet overpowering as the storm upon the mountain. All his efforts must accord with circumstances, and must harmonize with one another. In the selection of his theme, he must consult the occasion; in the style of his composition he must consult the theme; in his manner he must consult the style of composition. In these there must be an amiable concord, or the incongruity will offend some fine impulse.

Such, gentlemen, is the fitting out which nature's man should have in his pliant youth; and such is asked of every hearth stone.

But let us descend to particulars and mention some few glaring vices, which the want of these tools lead into, and make it important to avoid.

1st. Above all things, if you would win the praise of eloquence, diligently avoid affectation. It is only necessary to call your attention to every day occurrences, where you see monkey-like, is caught another's living voice, with all its intonations, and mimics all his motions, even to his very jerk of head and blink of eye.

Affectation! it is offensive as hypocrisy. It must be avoided, or there will be no hope of gaining popular approbation and applause! No excellences, or combination of excellences, can in the pubic estimation, redeem you from its curse. It is known to be so eminently hateful, that it is indulged in, only in supposed concealment. But it cannot be concealed. It is instantly discerned in the voice and manner of an entire stranger, whatever may be his efforts to conceal it. It is a species of counterfeit which requires no witness to expose. Nature herself abhors it. It offers violence to her well arranged economy, by which she varies the shades of human character; by which as our common mother she impresses each child with its proper features; as priestess of the family weds us to the gift, and forbids us to put asunder what she has joined together. If we rudely prosecute it, she may indeed permit a divorce, but will take a just revenge by marking our visage with the sign of incontinence.

Oh! how painful to see the fire of genius burning in the soul, and no tools at hand to chisel out the road clear of the breakers of imitation.

But what, it may be asked, is the design of declamation if it does not aim to reproduciate nature? We answer its design is to convert us back to nature, from whence we have strayed, and make us her disciples. It is an error to suppose that a debut upon the stage made in nature's style, and that its errors are her vices. Compare the awkward dullness of the young declaimer, with his eloquence commence amid exciting sports, when with soul of fire he rouses his young playmates, you will see that nature is the voice and source of eloquence. Reject nature, then, for an exact imitation of that which nature never made perfect, and you will indeed amuse the public mind, but the amusement of that mind will be the delight in the ridiculous.

2nd. Another error of no small magnitude, is excessive and violent action. Action is emphasis addressed to the eye. To render it impressive it must be both rare and graceful. If it be displayed in every sentence, it becomes insipid and offensive. To vary the river scenery, an occasional rush of water is delightful; but a current generally placid is what imparts interest to the cataract. It were better the speaker should never raise a hand, than keep it in an eternal rage of action.

Shakspeare warns the actor, "not to overstep the modesty of nature." Shall the stage regard the modesty of nature, and every thing else avoid and deride it? Or has nature now fallen into her dotage, lost her charms, and cast away the modesty of her youth? This we might suspect, when we see a speaker, display to his audience a variety of jerks, which threaten the violent dislocation of his members; when in a thousand acute angles, he seems to ape the zig-zag lightning, and manfully wars and struggles with the elements to expel them from the surrounding space. This raging manner is never, or scarcely ever commendable. No height of passion can sanction it. The deepest emotions of the soul are not thus displayed to advantage. Such emotions should appear to the audience under an apparent effort at concealment. They should seem to be partially exposed because concealment was impossible. For this the countenance, and especially the eye, must become the reporter of the passions.

The most moving strains of eloquence to which man ever listened, were accompanied with a few graceful gestures, but music like heaven flowed from his lips, while passion glowed in every feature, like the glare of fervid lightning in the face of the cloud.

3rd. And the last error we shall notice common to the uninitiated, is boisterous delivery.—This certainly is a foe to eloquence. It mistakes human nature. It is intended as an evidence of deep emotion, but it is rather the evidence of the want of it. Slight emotion is garrulous and boisterous. But when it becomes deep and fervid and is permitted to flow off in nature's own channel, it is not in a way that causes loud explosions. "He was so effected that he could not speak," is a hint that should not be lost. Boisterous speaking is sometimes practised to raise emotion in the speaker, but it quenches rather than lights up the flame. It is every way hurtful, if there be passion, it exhausts it; if there be none, it prevents it. An effectation of it is taken for hypocrisy, and arms the hearer with an invincible resolution to resist all argument and appeal.

Shakspeare insists that in the "very whirlwind of passion, the speaker must temper its expression into smoothness." In this he gave utterance to nature. It offends the very soul, "to hear a robust fellow tear a passion into tatters." The passion as well as the person appear to some advantage by being concealed. Reveal but little and it will be more winning than entire exposure. A boisterous delivery is unfriendly to all the attributes of oratory. It breeds graceless action, multiplies words, subtracts thoughts, confuses argument, and in a word, begets almost every vice of composition and delivery.

These you will admit gentlemen, are some of the errors of the day, and that they should be avoided. Our public speakers have sought the positive graces of elocution, but have taken no great pains to avoid its vices. Early and persevering efforts must do these things; if once confirmed, the defects will be incurable. Either of